



DOMINGUEZ-ESCALANTE NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA DRAFT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



❖ WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ❖

The 1968 National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act authorizes the preservation of certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. These rivers make up the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS). In the Dominguez-Escalante NCA (D-E NCA) draft Resource Management Plan (RMP), several segments of rivers and creeks in the D-E NCA are being evaluated to determine whether they are suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS.

What decisions regarding wild and scenic rivers are under consideration in this draft RMP?

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the BLM to assess BLM-managed river segments during the RMP process. This assessment includes an eligibility inventory and a suitability determination. Ten segments on six rivers and creeks (Gunnison River, Big and Little Dominguez Creeks, Rose Creek, Escalante Creek, and Cottonwood Creek) were found eligible in the inventory and are under consideration for suitability in this draft RMP. The BLM is considering five management alternatives, summarized in the table below:

	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
Number of Suitable Segments	0 (no decision on suitability made)	3	10	0	1

What happens after a suitability determination is made?

A determination of suitable or not suitable ends the wild and scenic rivers *assessment* process. **A determination of suitability is not the same as designation.** It is up to Congress or (under certain circumstances) the Secretary of the Interior to decide whether to *designate* a river for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

How did public input factor into the BLM's proposed decisions regarding wild and scenic rivers?

A group of independent stakeholders formed in 2010 to provide the BLM with recommendations on the suitability of rivers and creeks within the Gunnison River Basin. In April 2011, this group recommended that the BLM find all 10 segments under consideration not suitable. In May 2011, a second independent stakeholder group consisting of 10 environmental organizations recommended that the BLM find four of 10 segments suitable.

In June 2011, the D-E NCA Advisory Council considered both stakeholder recommendations. A majority of the Council voted against suitability for the four segments on which the two stakeholder groups

disagreed. The BLM considered all public input in developing its suitability determinations, and under the preferred alternative (Alternative E), it found one segment (Cottonwood Creek) to be suitable.

Where can I find more information in the draft RMP about wild and scenic rivers?

- The Alternatives Matrix in Chapter 2 (“Alternatives”), beginning on page 173, describes the decisions regarding wild and scenic rivers by alternative.
- Appendix O (“Wild and Scenic River Suitability Report”) describes the suitability analysis.

Questions to consider when commenting on decisions regarding wild and scenic rivers:

- Is there any missing, incorrect, or inconsistent information in the suitability report (Appendix O)?
- What do (or don’t) you like about the different management alternatives for wild and scenic rivers? Why?
- Are there other options for protecting the 10 segments under consideration that the BLM did not consider?